

SENATE BILL 158

By Johnson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39,  
Chapter 14, Part 2, relative to offenses against  
service animals.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-14-216(a), is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated subdivision:

(4) As used in this section:

(A) "Harm" means any injury to a service animal's physical condition; and

(B) "Serious physical harm" means any injury to a service animal's physical condition that involves substantial disfigurement or seriously impairs the function of a bodily organ or limb.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-14-216(b) and (c), are amended by deleting the language "maim or otherwise" wherever it appears.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-14-216(d), is amended by deleting the language "interfere" wherever it appears and substituting instead the language "harass or interfere".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-14-216, is amended by adding the following as new subsections:

(h) It is an offense to knowingly kill or cause serious physical harm to a service animal as defined in subdivision (a)(1)(B).

(i) Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting prosecution under any other applicable provision of law.

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-14-216(e), is amended by deleting the subsection in its entirety and substituting instead the following:

(e)

(1) A violation of subsection (b) is a Class E felony.

(2) A violation of subsection (c) is a Class A misdemeanor; provided, that a violation of subsection (c) that occurs during commission of any other offense that is a felony or Class A misdemeanor is a Class E felony.

(3) A violation of subsection (d) is a Class A misdemeanor.

(4) A violation of subsection (h) is a Class D felony.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015, the public welfare requiring it.